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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between maternal employment and college students' perceptions of the consequences of maternal employment and their own plans for future workplace involvement, as well as the degree to which this varies according to gender. It was hypothesized that the attitudes and preferences of adult children would be dependent upon the age at which the subject's mother returned to, or began to, work outside the home. College student subjects (N=335) completed demographic questionnaires and answered questions concerning their career and family expectations. Subjects also completed the Beliefs about the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children (BACMEC), the Childhood Appraisal Scale (CAS), and disclosed information about their own mother's work status at each stage of their development (infancy, preschool, childhood, and adolescence). The findings suggest that maternal employment history affected students' perceptions of the costs and benefits associated with having a working mother. Subjects whose mothers did not return to work perceived greater costs associated with maternal employment than did subjects whose mothers immediately returned to work. Daughters tended to view maternal employment as more beneficial and less detrimental to children than did sons. Other findings suggest that the subjects whose mothers were home with them initially and then returned to work formed both a close initial relationship with their mothers, and then with the return to work, the mothers became a positive role model. (NB)

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The Effects Of Differential Timing Of Maternal Return To Work

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During the past several decades, women have substantially increased their numbers in the labor force. In 1950, 34% of all women worked outside their homes; in 1970, 43% were working; and in 1984 51% were working (Selkow, 1984). In the 1990's, the rate of maternal employment for two-parent families with school age children will be at least 75% and this figure will continue to rise each year (Silverstein, 1991).

It is believed that this phenomenon is a natural result of many social changes: technological developments which have affected the nature of jobs, the streamlining of household operations and the increased economic efficiency of outside-the-home production; smaller family size, increased number of female headed households, and the economic circumstances which make it necessary for wives to be employed in order for their families to maintain an acceptable standard of living (Hoffman, 1980).

There is also evidence that the traditional female role of full-time housewife and mother is no longer psychologically satisfying for women (Hoffman, 1980). In addition, since the 1960's, women's educational levels have increased considerably, providing the motivation to obtain more satisfying employment (Hoffman, 1980).

Thus, we no longer need to concern ourselves with whether or not women should be a part of the work force, but rather, accept the fact that the majority of women are now employed outside of the home. What does this mean for employed women who have children?

There has been considerable debate over whether maternal employment is beneficial or detrimental for children.

Over the years many researchers have postulated global negative cognitive, academic, emotional and self-esteem repercussions of maternal employment. However, nearly four decades of research has failed to confirm the majority of pessimistic predictions about children of employed women. Here we hope to review the current available literature on the effects of maternal employment on children, and the marital relationship.

The direct effect of maternal employment on children has long been of interest to researchers. Much of the research has centered around the vocational aspirations, and sex-role development of those children with employed mothers.

Maternal employment has been shown to affect the vocational aspirations of children, especially the daughters of employed mothers (Selkow, 1984; Barak, Feldman, & Noy, 1991). Girls who have had working mothers were more likely to express an interest in a greater number of occupations and less interest in traditional female occupations (Selkow, 1984). Boys' vocational aspirations were also affected by their mother's employment and/or the degree to which her job was traditional for her sex (Selkow, 1984). Boys gave a significantly greater number of occupational choices if their mothers were employed. These choices also tended to be slightly less sex-stereotyped (Selkow, 1984). Selkow (1984) believes that role modeling is the cause for the children's less sex-stereotyped vocational aspirations.

An important relationship between maternal employment and subsequent career salience of their daughters has been found (Bielby, 1978; Almquist & Angrist 1971). The mother's presence in the labor force related positively to married daughters' expectations to derive pleasure in life primarily from a career, seven years past the attainment of a college degree, and negatively to single daughter's career involvement, one year beyond a college degree (Bielby, 1978). These career oriented daughters also were more interested in male dominant occupations (Almquist & Angrist, 1971). This suggests that past determinants (e.g., their mother's employment status) of career salience in young women are outweighed by contemporary factors in their lives such as their husband and economic situation (Bielby, 1978).

Sons and daughters of employed mothers have a more liberal outlook on appropriate sex roles for males and females in contemporary society (Gardner & LaBrecque, 1986; Jones & McBride, 1980; Marantz & Mansfield, 1977). The children of working mothers displayed less rigid sex-role stereotyping when asked to guess who would be most likely to perform a list of tasks (e.g., wash the car, play with stuffed animals); their responses were categorized as male, female, or sex-neutral (Jones & McBride, 1980). Most of the subjects also indicated that household responsibilities should be shared when parents both work outside the home (Gardner & Labrecque, 1986; Marantz & Mansfield, 1977).

Daughters of working mothers also perceived women as being more competitive, more cómpetent, less easily hurt emotionally, and

less in need of security than their non-employed mother counterparts (Marantz & Mansfield, 1977). However, contrary to many research findings, Marantz and Mansfield (1977) found "no significant relationship between maternal work status and career measure".

Bennett and Reardon (1985) in a review of the present research, indicated several overall effects that maternal employment has on children. For instance, the children of working mothers have broader and less stereotyped role concepts. These children conformed less to the traditional stereotype than did the children of non-working mothers (Robb & Raven, 1982). However, part-time working mothers do not appear to have the same effect. The children of part-time working mothers did not differ in their level of agreement with the stereotype from those children whose mothers did not work outside the home (Robb & Raven, 1982). One possible explanation could be that mothers who work part-time do not present a different role model from non-working mothers. Since many women who work part-time do so when their children are in school, many children may not even be aware or barely aware that their mother even works outside of the home (Robb & Raven, 1982). However, the mother who works full-time is likely to be away from the home for some of the time that the child is there, or the child is likely to spend time with a caretaker (Robb & Raven, 1982).

Bennett and Reardon (1985) also found that the daughters of working mothers view women as more competent than do daughters of non-working mothers. Also, girls of working mothers in the middle

and lower classes seem to perform better academically than do boys. There has been evidence to indicate that middle class boys do not achieve as well as boys with non-working mothers. The sons of working mothers also appear to have poorer psychosocial adjustment. However, it has been found that when fathers share more in the parenting tasks, the children show an increase in their adjustment (Bennett & Reardon, 1985).

The behaviors, attitudes, and self-images of adolescents of working and non-working mothers has also been studied. Morgan and Grube (1987) found that there was no evidence of any association between maternal employment and anti-social behavior, low self-image, less satisfactory relationships, or drug use. Employed mothers were judged by their children to be no less adequate as parents than were the full-time mothers. Furthermore, the children of employed mothers had higher academic aspirations, judging that it would be likely that they would go on to college.

Patricia Knaub (1986) studied children's perceptions of their dual-career family style. The subjects were surveyed to determine their satisfaction with this lifestyle, perceptions of family strength, and views on various issues related to the dual-career lifestyle. In general, the children rated their perceptions of the dual-career lifestyle favorably. They believed their families to be high in family strengths such as concern, respect, and support (Knaub, 1986). The sons of working mothers appeared to view men as warmer and more expressive which could be due to the increased amount of active caretaking fathers in dual-career families

participate in (Knaub, 1986). Overall, the children were highly supportive of the dual-career lifestyle. However, the children indicated that time constraints were a primary problem when both parents worked outside the home (Knaub, 1986).

Another important issue is the effect that maternal employment has on the relationship that children, especially adolescents, have with their parents. Disagreements between parents and children were reported more frequently by the children with employed mothers (Propper, 1972). Daughters of employed mothers reported more disagreements concerning the issues of dating, curfews, and frequency of going out. Sons of employed mothers reported more disagreements about clothing, politics, and religion (Propper, 1972). Since both sons and daughters of employed mothers tend to argue more about religion, dating, clothing, and curfews than children with non-employed mothers, family relationships may be perceived as troublesome when the mother is employed.

Using the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey, Moen and Dempster-McClain (1987) studied 224 dual-career married couple with children under the age of 13. They found that mothers who worked full-time would have preferred to work fewer hours in order to devote more time to childrearing and housemaking. Owen and Cox (1988) found that infants whose mothers worked more than forty hours per week were more anxious, which resulted in less animated and sensitive mother-child interactions. Older children with working mothers who work a lot of hours are most likely to be involved in self-care arrangements after school (Rodman & Pratto,

1987). This relative lack of maternal availability could contribute to the failure of children to participate in activities outside of the home.

The combination of employment outside of the home and the demands of maintaining a rich family life often creates a considerable amount of stress. The most common form of stress for dual-career families is a result of role overload (Skinner, 1980). Heckman, Bryson, and Bryson (1977) found that the demands of childrearing, particularly the problems associated with finding satisfactory child care arrangements, are a source of stress for younger dual-career couples. The stress inherent in the dual-career family has a direct negative impact on the marital relationship (Skinner, 1980). A woman's decision to be employed full-time versus homemaking full-time appeared to strain the marriage only when there were preschool children in the family (Skinner, 1980). This leads to the belief that dual-career couples may increase the degree of strain they experience themselves in an effort to prevent strain for their children (Skinner, 1980). There is no evidence which suggests that the dual-career lifestyle, in and of itself is stressful for children. Rather, the degree of stress experienced by the parents may have an indirect negative effect on the children (Skinner, 1980).

Bolger, Delongis, Kassler, and Wethington (1989) used daily diaries from both husbands and wives for a six-week period to examine how stressful work experiences (overloads, arguments with supervisors, co-workers, or subordinates at work) predict feelings

of overload, arguments with spouse, or other arguments. They found that there is less "contagion" from work to home than one might expect. Overload at work was likely to be followed by a reduction in home involvement (Bolger et al., 1989). When their spouse experienced work overload, respondents' workload at home increased while their spouse's home workload decreased , which suggests that the respondents were shouldering more of the household work for the spouse who has had a rough work day. This effect was more prevalent among wives shouldering the extra work for their husbands (Bolger et al, 1989).

A study conducted by Schwartzberg and Dytell (1988) concluded that employed and non-employed mothers do not report any differences with regard to their total amount of family stress or the specific subscales of family stress, including overload. There were some disparities within certain subscales, for instance, employed mothers reported less support from their spouses, while non-employed mothers reported less support from their children (Schwartzberg & Dytell, 1988). This consistency in reported stress levels supports the notion that a mother's role in the family remains constant, regardless of whether or not it is combined with employment (Schwartzberg & Dytell, 1988).

Even though women have entered the work force they still remain responsible for the majority of housemaking and childrearing tasks such as changing linens, dusting, cooking, and purchasing children's clothing (Schwartzberg & Dytell, 1988). Gottfried, Gottfried, and Bathurst (1988) reported that fathers on average

spend 26 minutes per day in direct interaction with their children below the age of six. As children get older, the time period decreases to just 16 minutes per day (Gottfried, Gottfried, & Bathurst 1988). This unequal sharing of child care and homemaking responsibilities appears to be the most important cause of marital conflict (Hochschild, 1989, as cited in Silverstein, 1991).

Bronfenbrenner and his colleagues (1984), using data from a 1979 survey, investigated the possibility that maternal employment influenced parents' perceptions of their young children. They reported several key findings. First, full-time working mothers gave the least enthusiastic descriptions of their sons, whereas part-time employed mothers described their boys in the most "glowing" terms. The part-time mothers' descriptions were in fact more positive than non-employed mothers (Bronfenbrenner, Alvarez, & Henderson, 1984). The mother's level of education also seemed to play a part in their perceptions of their children. Overall, the more educated mothers expressed more favorable views of their children. The women with more education and full-time employment made especially positive comments about their daughters, often remarking about their independence and competence (Bronfenbrenner et al., 1984). Bronfenbrenner et al. (1984) suggested that the boys' higher average physical activity and aggressiveness compared to girls', and the resulting need for greater control and supervision of boys might tax the patience of mothers with employment outside of the home. In general, Bronfenbrenner et al.

(1984) suggested that maternal employment has more positive effects on girls than boys.

Greenberger and O'Neil (1992) attempted to duplicate the Bronfenbrenner et al. (1984) study in order to see if the parents' perceptions of children have changed over the course of a decade. This is especially important considering that the employment rate for mothers was only about 44% in 1979, versus at least 57.4% in 1987 (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1992). Their results did support Bronfenbrenner's et al. (1984) contention that the more educated the mother, the more positively she viewed her children, independent of her employment status. Also, there were some indications that fathers and teachers view girls, whose mothers are employed, more negatively (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1992). It was also suggested that maternal employment was associated with fathers perceiving daughters as more unruly and aggressive (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1992). Fathers of 5 and 6 year olds also reported more negative or "problem" behavior by their children when mothers worked full-time (Greenberger & O'Neil, 1992).

Crouter, Perry-Jenkins, Huston, and McHale (1987) conducted a study examining the effects of maternal employment on family conflicts. In a study of 40 blue collar married couples with a preschool-aged child, fathers with employed wives reported significantly more arguments and complaints from their wives than did fathers with non-employed wives. This could stem from the fact that in dual-earner families men might be expected to perform more homemaking and childrearing tasks than men with non-employed wives

(Crouter et al., 1987). The fathers (husbands) do not appear to resent their wives for working outside of the home. In fact, the more hours their wives work, the more husbands report loving them (Crouter et al., 1987). The experimenters suggest that perhaps the men react negatively to the pressure to become involved in child care and homemaking, as well as to the negative tactics women may use to get them to become more involved (Crouter et al., 1987).

Men with rigid sex role stereotyping are more likely to have negative reactions to their wives' working because they seem to see this as a failure of their own wage-earning capacity. However, those fathers with less rigid sex-role definitions, especially those in highly educated, dual-career couples, express relief that their wives are sharing the financial burdens of the family (Gottfried, Gottfried, & Bathurst, 1988; Hoffman, 1989).

Baruch and Barnett (1986) found that the mother's attitude toward the male role is more important than the father's in influencing children's attitudes and is a stronger influence than his actual behavior. They also found maternal attitude to be among the strongest indicators of the father's level of participation. A father who performed traditionally feminine chores was more strongly associated with reduced stereotyping than were other forms of participation (Baruch & Barnett, 1986). However, men still spent little time alone with their children, they do a small portion of traditionally feminine chores and child-care tasks, and they rarely take responsibility for these (Baruch & Barnett, 1986). It appears that even when the mother is employed outside of the

home, men's involvement in the family work is "still in the form of a secondary helper, in that women must still plan and supervise the tasks that fathers do" (Baruch & Barnett, 1986).

The present study was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between maternal employment and college students' perceptions of the consequences of maternal employment and their own plans for future workplace involvement, as well as the degree to which this varies according to gender. This study provides an opportunity to assess some of the long term attributional consequences of maternal work status seen in young adults. Since the mass entry of women into the paid workforce has been relatively recent, little is known about the attitudes and preferences of adult children of employed mothers.

The current research extends prior work on maternal employment attitudes conducted at Ursinus over the past several years. This prior research has indicated that subjects view maternal employment as more beneficial to children if their own mothers were employed full-time. Conversely, the subjects whose mothers did not work tended to view maternal employment as more detrimental to children.

This study differs from the previous studies in that it will focus on an analysis of differences across gender, whereas in prior years the distinction between the perceptions of males and females was not specifically investigated. It is hypothesized that the attitudes and preferences of adult children are dependent upon the age at which the subject's mother returned to or began to work outside of the home.

Specifically, it is hypothesized that children will have the most favorable attitudes toward maternal employment when their own mothers worked continually throughout all stages of their lives (infancy - adolescence). When mothers remained at home during the first five years of the child's life, and then returned or began to work, it is hypothesized that the children would become more upset by this change in their lives, and consequently develop more negative attitudes about maternal employment. It is anticipated that this group is especially likely to harbor negative attitudes because during the first five years the child has been accustomed to their mother being at home with them and available to fulfill all of their needs more or less immediately. The expectation of continual maternal access would be disrupted by her returning to work, which might be expected to cause frustration and resentment. This unsettling experience of change is avoided when the mother either works throughout the first five years or continues at home after the child's fifth year.

Another situation which might lead to negative attitudes about maternal employment occurs when the mother, who has remained at home throughout the child's life, begins to work outside of the home when the child reaches adolescence. At this stage of development, children are already facing numerous changes and conflicts. Children are caught between still needing their parents and being independent young adults. Adolescents often find themselves feeling angry for still wanting and needing their parents. This anger might easily be displaced onto the mother when

she decides to begin work during this period, which could bring unresolved, threatening dependency needs to the surface.

This study will also examine the hypothesis that a significant difference in attitudes about maternal employment across gender exists. It is expected that young women who have been raised in homes with working mothers will not show negative effects as strongly because their identification with a less sex-role stereotyped role model has a compensatory positive effect on them. Whereas young men may not adjust as easily to the absence of the full attention of their mothers because their sense of being cheated is not tempered by a counterbalancing benefit, for daughters any negative effect of deprivation is presumed to be offset by the advantage of identification with a mother with more diverse social roles.

Methods

Subjects

The subjects used in this study were 335 college students. The sample consisted of 148 men and 187 women who were enrolled in an introductory psychology course at a small, private, liberal arts college in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The subjects ranged from 17 to 36 years of age.

Procedure

The packet used in this study was handed out to subjects in the introductory psychology class in which they were enrolled, following a brief speech about the current research being conducted on the consequences of maternal employment, both positive and

negative findings were presented. Subjects were asked to fill out the packet in its entirety. Ample time was given to the students to complete the questionnaire packet. The questionnaire packet consisted of four separate parts.

In part one, subjects were asked to provide demographic information and to answer questions concerning their career and family expectations. These questions required subjects to disclose information concerning their expectations about family plans, job type, job characteristics, and work preference based upon the age of their youngest child. Subjects were also asked 10 questions concerning their attitudes toward their mother and father. These questions required subjects to indicate their degree of agreement with each statement on a four point Likert scale.

Part two of the packet consisted of the BACMEC questionnaire (Greenberger et al., 1988). The BACMEC is a 24-item scale developed to measure Beliefs About the Consequences of Maternal Employment for Children. The BACMEC included beliefs about both benefits (13 items) and costs (11 items). Studies of five samples (n=375) have demonstrated that the total BACMEC scale and its subscales are highly reliable and have good convergent, divergent, and concurrent validity (Greenberger et al., 1988).

In part three of the packet, subjects were asked to disclose information about their mother's work status at each stage of development. The stages of development were infancy (birth to 1 1/2 years old), preschool (2 to 5 years old), childhood (6 to 12 years old), and adolescence (13 to 18 years old). The subjects

were asked to report whether their mothers were employed part time, full time, or not employed outside of the home during each stage of development. Subjects also disclosed information about their mother's job, indicating whether it was professional, white collar, or blue collar work. Subjects were also asked to indicate whether or not they had been raised in a single parent household.

Part four of the packet consisted of the CAS, the Childhood Appraisal Scale (Chambliss, Owens, & Carr, 1991). The CAS is an 18-item questionnaire designed to measure the subject's perception of the consequences of their mother's work status. The subjects were asked to rate each item on a scale from 1 to 4 depending upon how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement. The statements permitted subjects to indicate if they felt their lives would have been different if their mother's work status had been different when they were growing up. This allowed an assessment of the perceived impact of full time and part time maternal employment, as well as unemployment.

Results

Subjects were divided into four groups on the basis of their mothers' work status throughout all stages of their childhood (infancy-adolescence). The groups were categorized as no return to work (mothers had no outside employment, n=41), high delayed return (mothers had no outside employment until child reached adolescence, n=75), low delayed return (mothers had no outside employment until child reached school age, n=95), and immediate return to work (mothers were continuously employed since child's infancy, n=34).

Subjects from single parent households were excluded from these analyses.

For each subject summary scores on the two BACMEC subscales ("benefits" and "costs: of maternal employment) were calculated by adding the directionally adjusted item values. A summary measure of attitudes toward mother (ATM) was created by adding directionally adjusted item values assessing admiration, advice-seeking, and emulation of mother. High scores reflect subjects' positive attitudes toward their mothers.

A 2 X 4 MANOVA was performed on the cost and benefit subscales of the BACMEC, the ATM, and an item assessing attribution of the subjects' current unhappiness to past maternal employment status.

Significant maternal employment main effects were found on both the cost and ATM subscales. Subjects whose mothers did not return to work perceived greater costs associated with maternal employment, than subjects whose mothers immediately returned to work ($x=37.66$, $s.d.=10.78$, $n=41$ versus $x=26.24$, $s.d.=8.65$, $n=34$, $F(3, 225) = 9.51$, $p<.001$). The two delayed return groups scored in between the other two groups on the perceived cost scale.

Subjects with low delayed return mothers scored higher on the ATM scale, whereas the subjects' whose mothers did not return to work scored the lowest on the ATM scale ($x=15.39$, $s.d.=3.03$, $n=90$ versus $x=14.18$, $s.d.=3.68$, $n=40$, $F(3, 225) = 2.907$, $p<.05$).

A significant sex main effect was found on the benefit subscale and a trend was found on the cost subscale. Females tended to view maternal employment as more beneficial and less

costly, while males tended to view maternal employment as less beneficial (benefit scores: female, x=36.61, s.d.=10.80, n=136 versus males, x=47.64, s.d.=10.35, n=103, $F(1, 225) = 9.44$, $p<.01$) and more costly (cost scores: females, x=36.61, s.d.=10.75, n=136 versus males, x=33.22, s.d.=10.30, n=103, $F(1, 225) = 2.951$, $p=.087$).

For the entire sample, the correlation between the benefit and cost subscale was not significant, suggesting they tap independent dimensions ($r= -.0331$).

No significant Sex X Maternal Employment interaction effects were obtained. However, results suggested a trend ($p=.079$) on the item assessing subjects' attributions of current unhappiness to past maternal employment status. Daughters whose mothers returned immediately to work were most likely to blame their current unhappiness on the fact that their mothers' were employed. In contrast to daughters, sons were most likely to attribute their current unhappiness to their mothers' work status when she was in the high delayed return group.

Discussion

The present findings suggest that maternal employment history affected student's perceptions of the costs and benefits associated with having a working mother. The subjects whose mothers did not return to work perceived greater costs associated with maternal employment than subjects whose mothers immediately returned to work. Since the non-employed mothers were most likely home more than the employed mothers, their children probably learned to rely

on their mothers more and were more dependent on maternal assistance and guidance. Possibly subjects whose mothers were not employed viewed maternal employment as being associated with greater costs because they felt they received more support and stability because their mothers were fulfilling the traditional sex role of staying home and taking care of the children. In addition, they had no direct personal experiences to challenge the widely held negative portrayal of the impact of maternal employment.

However, there was a significant difference between the perceptions of daughters and sons. Daughters tended to view maternal employment as more beneficial and less detrimental to children than did the sons. This lends support to the hypothesis that young women who have been raised in homes with working mothers would not show negative effects as strongly because their identification with a less sex-role stereotyped role model has a compensatory positive effect on them. On the other hand, young men may not adjust as easily to the absence of the full attention of their mothers because their sense of being cheated is not tempered by a counterbalancing benefit.

The significance of the attitudes towards mother (ATM) subscale suggests that the children whose mothers were home with them initially and then returned to work formed both a close initial relationship with their mothers, and then with the return to work, the mothers became a positive role model (someone the child could admire, look up to, and feel comfortable asking for advice and opinions). This is in conflict with the hypothesis that

when mothers remained at home during the first five years of the child's life and then returned to or began to work, the child would develop negative attitudes about maternal employment because it disrupted the expected routine. This finding may help to alleviate some of the common feelings of worry and guilt some women feel when they are deciding whether or not to return to work, or when the best time is to return to work.

The trend found on the item assessing the subject's attributions of current unhappiness to past maternal employment status suggests that the daughters of immediate return to work mothers might be affected by the "supermom effect", and in turn they may place higher expectations to succeed upon themselves.

The fact that the sons were more likely to attribute their current unhappiness to their mothers' work status when she delayed return to work until the child reached adolescence, also lends support to the hypothesis that maternal employment which begins at this stage of life may lead to displacement of anger onto the mother. Perhaps the daughters did not attribute their current unhappiness to their mothers' work status in this situation because they do not feel the same "supermom effect" pressure that daughters do when their mothers' return to work at an earlier stage.

It seems as though maternal employment can be viewed as a positive experience for daughters of working mothers when the mother returns to work immediately or with a low amount of delay. Research conducted by Robb & Raven (1982) support the current finding that a working mother can provide her daughter with a

positive, non sex-role stereotyped role model, someone whom the daughter can feel comfortable talking with and asking opinions.

However, the data on the sons of working mothers is less clear. The present study seems to indicate that sons tend to view maternal employment more negatively than do daughters, and they also attribute their current unhappiness more to their mothers' employment status while they were growing up.

It is important to investigate the effects of differential timing of mother return to work on sons more thoroughly. With a greater percentage of women being employed outside of the home, both a husband's provision of support and a sharing of household responsibilities, is becoming more important. If a man who was raised in a home where his mother was employed grows up with negative feelings and perceptions about maternal employment, it could create additional stress in his marriage if the wife is employed outside of the home. It has been found that men with less rigid sex-role definitions express relief when their wives are sharing the financial burdens of the family (Hoffman, 1989). In contrast, men with rigid sex-role stereotypes are more likely to have negative reactions to their wives' working (Gottfried, et al., 1988).

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